

# GREAT DISASTERS OF 1904 HAVE WIPED OUT 6,442 LIVES

Review of Year's Tragedies Reveals Total of Startling Magnitude.

OVER 2,000 KILLED IN JUNE

Long List Culminates With the Slocum Disaster and Sinking of the Norge.

When 1904 takes its place in history it will figure not only as a year of wars and insurrections, in the far East and in Tibet, in Southwest Africa and the Balkans, in South America and the Philippines, nor only as a twelve-month of great conflagrations, sweeping across such centers of population as Baltimore and St. Petersburg, Rochester and Toronto, to the tune of losses running high into the millions. Rather than either of these it will go down as a year of dark calamity, because of its long and appalling disasters which have fed so freely upon human life.

Taking no account of the carnage of its wars, including no accidents, however tragic, which have not brought at least five deaths each, the total runs to 6,442.

The average loss of life of 536 a month of 123 a week of more than seventeen a day! This is the record of 1904.

Thirteen Appalling Tragedies.

Ill omens stood on the very threshold of the year, for, on January 1st, a railroad wreck at Willard, Kan., brought ten fatalities to form the first item in the long list of such disastrous happenings, which were to total at 64—more than a fifth of this coming from the accident near Eden, Cal., last August, when 116 lives were lost. Yet the first item in the list is a list of a baker's dozen in each of which at least one hundred perished:

Burning and sinking of the steamer "Slocum"..... 1,361  
Sinking of the steamer "Norge"..... 446  
Fursing dam at Tsiman Ju, China..... 328  
Collapsed pier, Azoff, Russia..... 200  
Cloud burst near Manila, P. I..... 200  
Tornado over Central and Southern Russia..... 166  
Harlock mine explosion, Pennsylvania..... 178  
Capsized ferryboat, Keron, Russia..... 166  
Railroad wreck near Eden, Cal..... 107  
Hurricane, Coochin China..... 107  
Steamer "Aramac" sunk off Australia..... 104  
Fire at Bingham, P. I..... 100  
"Glendon" "Schaffner" collision..... 100  
Total..... 3,465

The "Slocum" disaster stands in unique horror in all history. A quarter of a century ago, in the English river Thames, near Woolwich, the "Bywell Castle," with loss of life reaching nearly to 700. That, until the appalling news of the "Slocum's" ending came out of New York last June, was the worst disaster of record.

The other marine tragedy of six months ago—the sinking of the "Norge" in the North Atlantic, came very near to surpassing all its fatal predecessors.

"Queen Charlotte," however, (1800) resulted in 673 fatalities, and so must rank first. Yet take the two most famous ocean disasters—the "Titanic" (1912) and the "Eden" (1862) the latter was less than twenty-five times as many as the "Norge," while the "Bourgoigne," sunk in collision at sea, (1893) only 546 were drowned.

Greatest Loss of Life on Water.

With its losses classified under general headings, this is the reading of 1904's death roll:

Maritime..... 2,770  
Hurricane..... 1,416  
Wind, cold and floods..... 554  
Railroad accidents..... 541  
Mine accidents..... 491  
Explosions..... 286  
Collapsed buildings..... 242  
Fire..... 195  
Snow and landslides..... 181  
Volcanoes and earthquakes..... 87  
Sinking of ships..... 86  
Skating and swimming accidents..... 46  
Elevator and trolley accidents..... 12  
Ballooning..... 8  
Total..... 6,442

The final three items emphasize the necessary incompleteness of any such record as this. It can be approximately accurate, but conditions imposed by the sufficiency of records in many cases where the loss of life has amounted to only one or two, necessitate that the line be drawn somewhere. As has been said, no items have been included where less than five lives have been lost, though the aggregate of the one and twos, threes and fours, could they all be gathered, would swell this total to double its present 6,442.

An instance, indicative of the large figures so far rolled up, is the comparatively speaking, are "little" disasters, is to be found in the fact that in the city of Greater New York alone, and only for the months of July and August last, eighteen lives were lost in railway accidents, in every case one at a time.

The year's full list, giving the exact dates as well as the fatalities of each disaster, follows:

January.

1. Railroad wreck near Willard, Kan. 10

2. Steamer "Lagley" "turned turtle" in the Upper Congo..... 24

3. Boiler explosion on H. M. S. "Wal-laroo"..... 5

4. Dynamite explosion, Mexico City..... 20

5. Extreme cold through Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts..... 35

February.

1. Collapse of a pier, Azoff, Russia..... 200

2. Powder explosion, Fort Bhatinda, British India..... 40

3. Collision of "Edward Windom" and "Unguis" off Brooklyn, N. Y..... 5

4. Derrailed train, near Mangus, Nicaragua..... 20

5. Volcano eruption, Mirapal, D. E. I. 12

6. Tidal wave, French coast, near Penmarc'h..... 17

7. Fire, Trenton, N. J..... 50

8. Street cave-in, environs of St. Petersburg..... 50

9. Railroad collision, near Sands Point, New York..... 11

10. Snowslide above Salt Lake City, Utah..... 10

11. Schooner "Dorchester" lost in storm off Pigeon Cove, Mass..... 5

12. Tenement fire, Brooklyn, N. Y..... 6

13. Fire, Croton, N. Y..... 6

14. Railroad collision, near Dyersville, Iowa..... 7

15. Bursting dam near Tsiman Ju, China..... 328

16. Ice and flood, Richmond, Va..... 20

17. Collapsed factory fire, Paris, France..... 20

18. Dynamite explosion, Jackson, Utah..... 20

19. Avalanche, in Bassee Alps..... 6

20. Mine cave-in, Butte, Mont..... 6

21. Snow slide, near Crested Butte, Colo..... 6

22. Fire at sea, on board steamer "Queen" off Colorado River..... 12

23. Fire, St. Feliu, P. I..... 100

24. Fire in tenement district, London, England..... 22

25. Collapse of the Hotel Darlington, New York City..... 22

Total..... 589

March.

1. Powder explosion, Somerset, West, Cape town..... 5

2. Steamer "Aramac" struck a reef off Australian coast..... 104

3. Bridge collapse, Ironton, Ohio..... 10

4. Dynamite explosion, Laurore, Pa..... 6

5. Railroad wreck, near Hammondsville, Ind..... 6

6. Steamer "Cambodge" lost in storm off Chinese coast..... 47

7. Railroad collision, near Mobile, Ala..... 9

8. Prairie fires, Oklahoma Territory..... 6

9. Steamer "Lamora" lost in storm near Puget Sound..... 30

10. Railroad wreck, near Kewanee, Ill..... 30

11. H. M. torpedo boat "Al" sunk during maneuvers, Portsmouth, N. H..... 11

12. Collision of "Mona" and "Lady Cairn" in Dublin Bay..... 22

13. Tornado over the Reunion Isles..... 22

14. Floods throughout Indiana..... 8

15. Fall of cage in mine at Dorrence, Penn..... 7

16. Powder explosion, Scranton, Penn..... 7

Total..... 841

April.

1. Powder explosion, St. Petersburg, Russia..... 10

2. Dynamite explosion, Pilsburg, Pa..... 10

3. Earthquake, Ecuador..... 53

4. Steamer "Herald" struck a reef off Normandy coast..... 18

5. Fire, Mt. Vernon, N. Y..... 5

6. Tornado in northwestern Texas..... 8

7. Mine explosion, Madrid, Spain..... 14

8. Trolley wreck, environs of Santa Barbara, Cal..... 5

9. Fire, Somerset, Penn..... 10

10. Railroad wreck at Zacatecas, Mex..... 69

11. Mine explosion, Prangins, Italy..... 5

12. Gun explosion, in turret of U. S. S. "Missouri"..... 33

13. Tornado across Texas, Indian Territory, and Arkansas..... 15

14. Mine explosion, Spain..... 53

15. Mine explosion near Ventosa, Spain..... 53

16. Steamer "Omora" on the rocks near Halifax..... 6

17. Railroad wreck near Kinross, Mo..... 5

Total..... 450

May.

1. Hurricane, Coochin China..... 107

2. Powder explosion, Camden, N. J..... 5

3. Mine fire, near Scranton, Penn..... 5

4. Tornado along southern coast of Texas..... 5

5. Steamer "Turret Bay" ran on the rocks off Halifax..... 13

6. Powder explosion, Findlay, Ohio..... 10

7. Railroad wreck, near Houghton, Tenn..... 25

8. Dynamite explosion, Louisville, Ky..... 10

9. Suffocated by mine gas, Williams-town, Penn..... 10

Total..... 150

June.

1. Factory fire, Peoria, Ill..... 11

Total..... 11

July.

1. Railroad wreck, near Litchfield, Ill..... 27

2. Victims of the celebration..... 17

3. Tornado and floods in Missouri..... 17

4. Powder explosion at Runford, N. J..... 17

5. Broad collision, near Middletown, N. J..... 16

6. Windstorm in St. Louis, Mo..... 16

7. Steamer "Nemesia" lost off New South Wales..... 200

8. Clashed collision, near Rock Hill, S. C..... 19

9. Railroad collision, near Glenwood, Ill..... 19

10. Drowned while bathing at Edge-water, Va..... 5

11. Extreme cold, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Illinois..... 8

12. Killed by lightning near Hazleton, Pa..... 5

13. Drowned in a conduit, Jamaica..... 52

Total..... 451

August.

1. Capsized sailboat, Digby, Nova Scotia..... 9

2. Gunpowder explosion, at Minden, La..... 9

3. Drowned bathing, Alton, Ill..... 55

4. Windstorm over Belgium..... 55

5. Railroad wreck near Eden, Cal..... 115

6. Steamer "Penguin" lost off Alaska..... 25

7. Flooded mine, near Gold Hill, N. C..... 20

8. Collision of the "Inverkip" and "Carroll" off Ireland..... 20

9. Capsizing of a launch at the Washington (D. C.) regatta..... 10

10. Dynamite explosion, near St. Louis, Mo..... 7

11. Railroad collision, near Chicago, Ill..... 5

12. Gunpowder explosion, Havana, Cuba..... 5

13. Tornado in New York State..... 5

14. Cyclone in Arizona, the Dakotas, and Colorado..... 25

15. Destruction by fire of Bhang, Philippine Islands..... 100

16. Capsized rowboat, near Aden, S. C..... 10

17. Capsized ferryboat, near Lake, Russia..... 70

18. Railroad collision, near Richmond, Quebec..... 70

Total..... 458

September.

1. Railroad wreck near Shintatuta, 1-4

2. Gale off the coast of Labrador..... 42

3. Railroad wreck, environs of St. Louis..... 6

4. Tenement fire, Upper Sandusky, Ohio..... 14

5. Fire, near Fredericksburg, N. B..... 5

6. Capsized launch, near Cleveland, O..... 6

7. Railroad wreck near Ironton, Ohio..... 6

8. Railroad wreck near the Catawba River, S. C..... 5

9. Collision of launch and steamer, Philadelphia harbor..... 8

10. Tenement fire, New York City..... 8

11. Railway ballast, near Vienna, Austria..... 7

12. Tug sunk during river storm, Philadelphia, Pa..... 7

13. Fire, Columbia, Ky..... 7

14. Mine cave-in, Hibernia, N. J..... 5

15. Collapsed school-room floor, Pleasant Ridge, O..... 10

16. Railroad wreck, near Hodges Station, Tenn..... 62

Total..... 210

October.

1. Floods in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Indian Territory..... 30

2. Steamer "Boscoville" struck reef near Marble Islands..... 5

3. Mine cave-in, Kothem, Germany..... 15

4. Gunpowder explosion, Calicut, India..... 11

5. Capsized sailboat, Pensacola, Fla..... 5

6. Drowned while bathing, Berlin, Wis..... 6

7. Suffocated in coal mine near Port Huron..... 6

8. Railroad collision, near Warrensburg, Mo..... 25

9. Collapsing wall, Santiago, Chile..... 19

10. Schooner "Wentworth" wrecked off Chatham, Mass..... 12

11. Schooner "Melrose" wrecked off Florida coast..... 7

12. Schooner "Elwood Benton" wrecked near Provincetown..... 5

13. Mine explosion, Terico, Colo..... 21

14. Fire, St. Petersburg, Russia..... 11

Total..... 184

November.

1. Collision steamer "Stanley Hall" and schooner "Stanley Hall"..... 5

2. Barring reaction at New York..... 9

3. Falling mine cage, near Wilkes-barre, Pa..... 9

4. Collision steamers "Glendon" and "Schaffner" off Alaska..... 100

5. Collapsed bridge, near Charleston, W. Va..... 23

6. Earthquake at Kinyih, Formosa..... 78

7. Foundering of "Thalia" and "Nep-tune" in North Sea..... 36

8. Collision of 66 tanks, China..... 11

9. Blizzard along Atlantic coast with gale at sea..... 16

10. Tenement fire, Williamsburg, N. Y..... 12

11. Wine and flood, Nanuan Isles..... 50

12. Explosion of gas tanks, Chicago..... 5

13. Extreme cold throughout England..... 5

14. War house fire, Lancaster, Penn..... 5

Total..... 327

December.

1. Collision of steamers "Blanche" and "Hesper" in the North Sea..... 7

2. Foundering of steamer "Wipia" in the Black Sea..... 70

3. Mine explosion, Burnett, Washington..... 12

4. Lifeboat swung overboard, Newburgh, Northumberland, England..... 11

5. Mine flood, Isle of Man..... 10

6. Steamer "Nar" wrecked at the mouth of the Spey, Ireland..... 10

7. Collapsed bridge, near Charleston, W. Va..... 23

8. Fire, Loughrea, Ireland..... 5

9. Burning of steamer "Glen Island" Long Island Sound, N. Y..... 9

10. Gale off the coast of Newfoundland..... 67

11. Boiler explosion, Bohorsburg, Pa..... 37

12. Collapsed wall, Minneapolis, Minn..... 22

13. Mine fire, Bolivar, Penn..... 10

14. Railway collision, near Paris, France..... 12

15. Railway collision, Maud's Station, N. Y..... 7

16. Boiler explosion, Walville, Weymouth, England..... 6

Total..... 391

Death by Months and Days.

The "Slocum" and "Norge" disasters and the Russian tornado combined to make June by far the fatal of the months; even the wholesale loss of life, characteristic to accidents in the East, at the bursting dam in China and on Azoff's pier could raise February total to but 88. The others follow in order: January, August, July, April, March, November, December, September, May and October with the least to last, 34.

The "Slocum" again has made the fifteenth of the month the day most fatal to life; 1,361 all told. The first was least fatal, seeing that twenty-one killed during its seven appearances. In the number of accidents rather than in the number of lives lost the 4th was most fatal with a total of thirteen; the 19th the date of only two mishappenings.

The "Norge" the 13th was not marked. Five of the twelve days to

12. Collision of steamers "Canada" and "Cape Breton" off Borel..... 5  
15. Wind and floods through Cuba..... 25  
16. Steamer "Slocum" burned and sunk, East River, N. Y..... 1,361  
17. Drowning accident, Poplar Rapid, Canada..... 108  
23. Railroad wreck, Calamocha, Spain..... 50  
24. Collapse of a ferry, Kerson, Russia..... 10  
25. Drowning accident, near New York..... 10  
26. Cloudburst, Oakdale, Penn..... 5  
27. Wind and floods, central New York State..... 8  
28. Steamer "Norge" struck rocks and sank, North Atlantic..... 446  
29. Tornado over Southern and Central Russia..... 106  
Total..... 2,150

July.  
3. Railroad wreck, near Litchfield, Ill..... 27  
4. Victims of the celebration..... 17  
7-8. Tornado and floods in Missouri..... 17  
8. Powder explosion at Runford, N. J..... 17  
10. Broad collision, near Middletown, N. J..... 16  
11. Windstorm in St. Louis, Mo..... 16  
12. Steamer "Nemesia" lost off New South Wales..... 200  
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17. Extreme cold, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Illinois..... 8  
27. Killed by lightning near Hazleton, Pa..... 5  
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Total..... 451

August.  
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5. Drowned bathing, Alton, Ill..... 55  
7. Windstorm over Belgium..... 55  
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